

**From:** Michael Scottaline  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 12/31/01 10:47am  
**Subject:** Proposed Settlement

I'm taking this opportunity to express my dissatisfaction with at least portions of the proposed settlement with Microsoft Corporation in the US v. Microsoft case. I do not use Microsoft products for the most part (I use Linux), but I do not consider myself one of the "enemies" of their software. While I believe some of their OS's are rather unstable, and some of their software is "buggy" and problematic, I actually do believe that some of their software has been responsible for the incredible increase in the usage and usability of personal computers. My personal view is not that Microsoft must be \*punished\* beyond the scope of the proposed settlement. I have no personal interest in punishment, per se. I am interested in the settlement enhancing competition in the computer software market. I will stress only two areas of concern at this time. As an educator for the past 28 years, I am naturally delighted that part of the agreement has Microsoft providing computers to underfinanced school districts. It is unthinkable that students might graduate from High School, unexposed to even the most basic computer skills. However, I don't think that providing what are sometimes called \*Wintel\* machines enhances competitiveness. Microsoft simply gets another opportunity to teach young people that Windows is what an Operating System is! Many students where I work, even those that are reasonably computer literate believe that x86 computers MUST run on Windows. This portion of the settlement would simply provide Microsoft with an opportunity to extend that type of growing dominance in the education market (likely at the expense of Apple Corporation). Perhaps Microsoft should be forced to provide the hardware running an alternative OS along side the ubiquitous Windows in a dual boot fashion (this would have to be monitored; IBM might be willing to provide some expertise in this area). I'm also concerned that little is done to insure that Microsoft not take advantage of their near monopoly in OS to cripple competitors in other software areas. Perhaps Microsoft should be required to make the filters of their productivity software (Office suites, databases, etc.) OpenSource. For example, competing Office Suites should have access to Microsoft code to make their own Office Suites capable of importing and exporting Microsoft Office files. I fear the proposed UCITA will provide Microsoft with an opportunity to make changes to their proprietary extensions (.doc, .xls, etc) while it will be illegal for anyone else to reverse engineer that file format to create new import and export filters. Again, my concern is not necessarily punishment, but enhanced competitiveness. I'm not certain the proposed settlement/compromise goes far enough in this direction.

Thank You for the opportunity to express an opinion in this matter,  
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